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## France

## Oilseeds and Products

# French Rapeseed Production Continues to Increase 2006

**Approved by:**

Elizabeth Berry  
U.S. Embassy

**Prepared by:**

Marie-Cécile Hénard

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**Report Highlights:**

Following a record crop in 2005 of 4.5 million MT from 1.2 million ha, French rapeseed production in 2006 is again expected to be very high in response to increased biodiesel demands.

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Includes PSD Changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Paris [FR1]  
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**Rapeseed:**

French Ministry of Agriculture preliminary estimates are that French winter rapeseed plantings, which comprise the bulk of total French rapeseed plantings, increased 8 percent from 1.2 million ha in 2005 to 1.3 million ha in 2006. In 2005, France had a record rapeseed crop of 4.5 million MT due to large planting acreage and high yields of 3.65 MT/ha. For 2006, French rapeseed production is projected at 4-4.7 million MT, depending on the yield. Even though winter temperatures have been colder than average, significantly reducing the size of the plants, these abnormally low temperatures are not expected to negatively impact yields.

ONIOL, the French oilseed board, estimates that the bulk of the crop (2.37 million MT) will be used for crushing, an increase from 2 million in MY 2004/05. 1.65 million MT is forecast to for exports, an increase from 1.44 million MT last year. The growing demand from the French and German biodiesel industries for rapeseed oil is driving the increased rapeseed production in France (see FR6005) and could result in increased exports of French seeds to Germany. The increased rape meal is expected to continue partially replacing soybean meal in animal feed rations, particularly in the poultry and dairy sectors.

**Sunflower Seed:**

There are no estimates available for 2006 production as planting occurs in the spring, however an increase is unlikely. Crush margins for sunflower seed are significantly lower than for rapeseed, therefore crushers demand for sunflower seed is expected to be stable or to decline from 2005.

In 2005, France produced 1.5 million MT of sunflower seed planted on 642,000 ha. ONIOL estimates 905,000 MT of the production will be crushed, down from 953,000 in MY 2004/05, and 400,000 MT will be exported in MY 2005/06, a drop from 515,000 MT last year. With declining crush and exports, ending stocks of sunflower seeds are likely to be high in MY 2005/06.

**Soybeans:**

French soybean production consisted of 141,000 MT in 2005 on an acreage of 57,000 ha. No significant increase is expected in 2006. ONIOL expects that French imports of soybeans will be significantly down to 350,000 MT in 2005/06 from 570,000 MT in 2004/05). Production and imports are expected to be mostly distributed between 280,000 MT for crushing, (significantly down from 420,000 MT in 2004/05), and 165,000 MT for animal feed in MY 2005/06 (stable).

France tends to increase imports of soybean meal and limit imports of soybeans, as a result of the increasing quality of soybean meal imported from South America, and in order to dedicate a larger crush capacity for the crush of domestically-grown seeds (especially rapeseed).